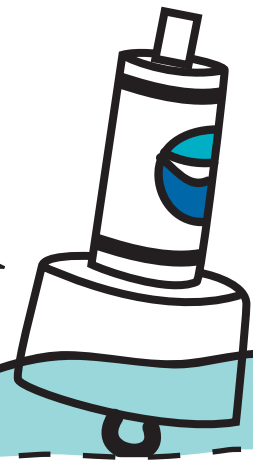


Shipwreck

Detectives



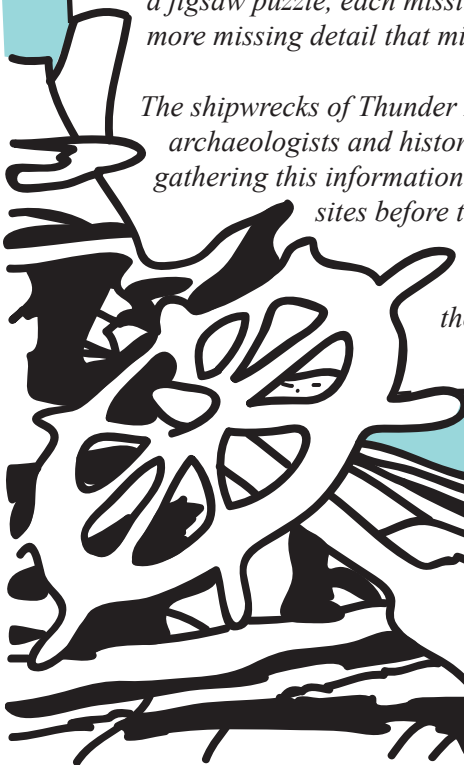
Archaeologists seek to understand past cultures by scientifically analyzing the material remains, such as sites and **artifacts**, left behind by human activities. Underwater archaeology is the study of any material remains that are found underwater. One particular aspect of underwater archaeology is maritime archaeology. **Maritime archaeologists** study the history of human interaction with seas, lakes, and rivers through the investigation of the remains of vessels, shore side facilities, cargoes, and artifacts.

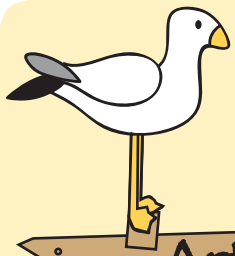
Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary is an important location for maritime archaeologists. Approximately 200 shipwrecks have been found in and around the sanctuary, representing at least one example of every type of vessel that sailed on the Great Lakes during the “Shipwreck Century” from 1825-1925.

Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary is located in the cold, fresh waters of Lake Huron. The lake acts like a giant refrigerator for artifacts, preserving them in excellent condition for over one hundred years. Once artifacts are removed from an underwater site and brought up to the surface, they begin to decay or rust quickly. These artifacts need to be conserved and the **conservation** process can take a very long time. Leaving artifacts in place not only ensures the preservation of the artifacts, but also the **preservation** of Great Lakes maritime heritage.

For maritime archaeologists, the artifacts found on board a ship, as well as the wreck itself, provide clues necessary for understanding the story of a vessel. These clues are like the pieces of a jigsaw puzzle, archaeologists can piece them together to re-create a fuller picture of the ship's story. Artifacts can tell us how a ship was used, where it was headed, and what the daily lives of the crew or passengers on board may have been like. Just like a jigsaw puzzle, each missing artifact leaves a hole in the story. Every item removed from a shipwreck is one more missing detail that might never be recovered.

The shipwrecks of Thunder Bay and the artifacts on board are valuable cultural resources that provide archaeologists and historians with important information about the past on the Great Lakes. However, gathering this information accurately depends upon archaeologists' and historians' abilities to study these sites before they are disturbed and salvaged. The underwater sites in Thunder Bay represent our shared maritime heritage, making preserving and protecting these sites everyone's responsibility, from **SCUBA** divers to students like you. When visiting these sites, it is important to remember to take only pictures and leave only bubbles.





This pitcher was recovered from the *Pewabic*, a passenger steamer that sank in 1865 after colliding with its sister ship, the *Meteor*. Why is the preservation of this artifact so exciting? Not only is the ceramic pitcher over one hundred and forty years old, but it is an important clue that tells archaeologists and historians about the people on board the *Pewabic* before it sank.



Arti-FACTS

Activity

In this activity, you are going to pretend to be a maritime archaeologist. A new shipwreck has been discovered, and you will SCUBA dive on the shipwreck and record what you find. You will make observations and collect data about the artifacts found on board and the shipwreck itself. You will then use that information to make hypotheses about the shipwreck and its history.

Materials

- Clipboard (1 per group)
- Shipwreck Detectives Worksheet
- Parts of a Ship Diagram

Vessel Vocab

Artifact – Object(s) that have been modified, shaped, or used by humans.

Conservation – The process of treating an artifact to prevent decay.

Maritime Archaeology – A discipline that studies human interaction with the sea, lakes and rivers through the study of vessels, shore side facilities, cargoes, and human remains.

Preservation – The activity of protecting something from loss and danger.

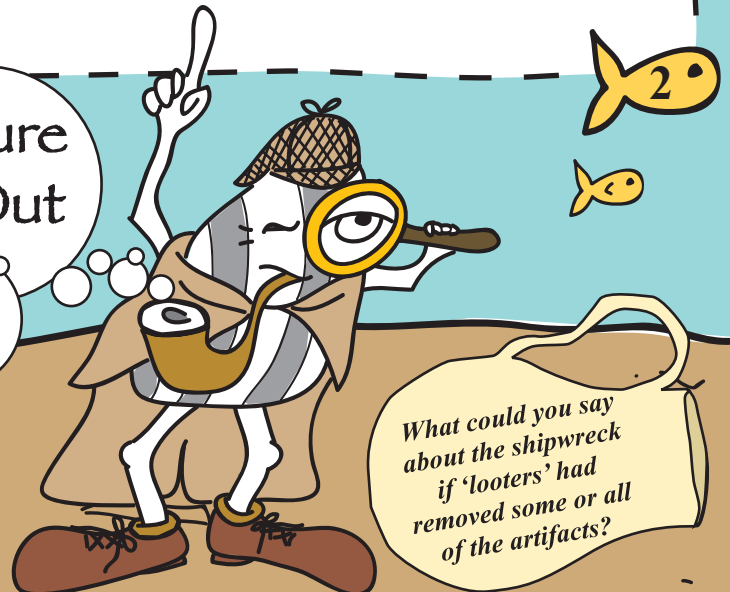
SCUBA – Self-Contained Underwater Breathing Apparatus

Crew Commands

1. For safety, divers never dive alone. Work with a group of other students as your dive buddies.
2. Take a look at the artifacts found in your section of the wreck. Can you tell what they are? Who might have used them? What might they have been used for? Are they related to one another? Remember that the locations of these artifacts provide clues to the story of the shipwreck. As a maritime archaeologist, you would never disturb the artifacts by moving them.
3. Use your Shipwreck Detectives Worksheet to list the artifacts that you found during your dive and any other observations you made about the artifacts or the shipwreck itself. Remember to look for anything that will give you clues about the ship's history, especially information like names, symbols, dates, etc.
4. Try to figure out what your section of the shipwreck might have been used for based on the artifacts you and your dive buddies found.
5. Try to figure out what kind of shipwreck you and your dive buddies are looking at and what you can tell about the wreck from the artifacts on it.

Figure It Out

With
Inspector
Perry
Mussel



Shipwreck Challenge

Pretend that you are really SCUBA diving and cannot talk to your dive buddies. Find another way to communicate your observations while you are underwater. (Hint: try using hand signals!)